ASD Program- Administrative Walkthrough Checklist

Evidence Based Practices (EBPs) should be utilized to best support the needs of students with Autism. Two national projects, *The National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders* (NPDC) *and The National Standards Project (NSP),* have reviewed substantial amounts of research and have identified Evidence Based Practices in the field of Autism. The interventions described in this checklist are among the identified evidence based practices. This checklist specifically reviews Visual Support Strategies, Functional Communication Training, Picture Exchange Communication System and Reinforcement interventions. In addition to the EBPs, lesson planning and data based decision making are also critical features in the ASD programs.

This checklist is intended to provide administrators with an overview and examples of the core instructional strategies and program components that are foundational for educational programs serving students with Autism. These specific EBPs have been targeted for implementation across the ASD programs.

Visual Support Strategies

Visual Supports are defined as: any visual display that supports the learner engaging in a desired behavior or skills independent of prompts. Examples of visual supports include pictures, written words, objects within the environment, arrangement of the environment or visual boundaries, schedules, maps, labels, organization systems, and timelines (NPDC 2014).

Classroom Environment and Physical Structure:

☐ The classroom environment is visually organized with clearly defined spaces/areas (some may include: Large group, Small group centers/stations, Play/Leisure, Transition area, Book/Reading, Break, Sensory)

☐ Goals for Structure
  o Increase student independence and adaptive skills for adult life
  o Increase opportunities for spontaneous communication
  o Create a visually clear and easy to understand environment
  o Capitalize on visual strengths of learners
  o Create opportunities for students to generalize learned skills
  o Helps students compensate for the challenges with organizational skills

☐ Clear Physical and Visual Boundaries identifies where each area begins and ends, as well as establishes context and segments the environment

☐ Physical structure changes based on the needs and ages of the students

☐ Minimize Visual and Auditory Distractions to assist the student to focus on the important concepts and tasks

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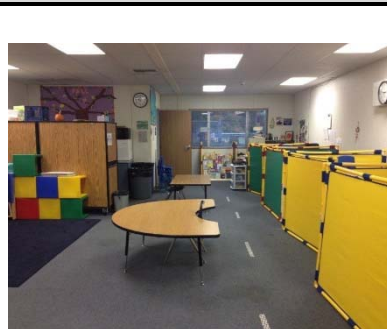
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Whole Class Schedules: ☐ A posted stationary visual representation of the day ☐ Arranged in written or pictorial form and referenced throughout the day ☐ States specific order of activities ☐ Actively used by teacher to indicate activity completion and transition to new activities ☐ New or different activities are identified with a visual strategy (arrow, star, color)	
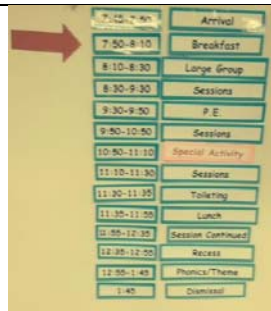
Student Schedules:
☐ Schedules are used as a tool to teach organizational and planning skills
☐ The schedule allows students to view the sequence of events in their day and identify what activities will come next
☐ Schedules are <u>reviewed</u> with students on an <u>on-going basis</u> throughout the day, clearly identifying when activities are finished
☐ Students and staff are aware of all changes in <u>advance</u> and students are actively taught to accept the changes through the use of their individual schedules and visual cues
☐ Schedules are developed based on the student's assessed skill and ability level
    o The material, length of schedule and student interaction with the schedule progresses from simple to complex.
        ▪ Object, photograph, colored icon, black and white icon, written word
        ▪ Single item, part day, full day
        ▪ Matching, check off/cross off
        ▪ Stationary, portable
	Early learner/emerging skills Colored Icon/Colored strip/ Sationary
	
	Color coded by student Part-day, colored icon
	
	Older learner/advanced skills schedules
	
	Portable, Full day, colored icon Portable Full day, written word

Visually Structured Work System: ☐ A systematic visual system which allows a student to receive and understand information and increase independence ☐ The work system clearly defines the work expectations: what work, how much work, when is it finished and what comes next ☐ A work system allows a teacher to clarify expectations while capitalizing on the visual strengths of the learner ☐ The system minimizes auditory input and promotes organization	

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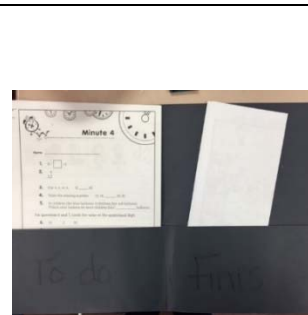
General Visual Supports:

Visual Expectations/ Lanyard Rules:
- ☐ Visual icons and written words are used to show students the expected behaviors throughout the day and allow students to receive and understand information
- ☐ This strategy allows the teacher to clarify expectations
- ☐ Visual rules are systematically taught to students and used as a prompt or reminder when needed

Visual Timers:
- ☐ Provides a visual concrete system to represent the abstract concept of time and time passing
- ☐ A visual timer allows the students to "see" time passing and prepare for transitions and activities
- ☐ Visual timers are used across the day to support students with concepts of time, including waiting for preferred tasks and ending activities

First-Then Strip:
- ☐ A basic visual system that identifies the order of activities
- ☐ It may be used in a variety of settings at several levels to help with transitions
- ☐ A timer can be attached to the system if needed to further clarify expectations

Self-Regulation Visual supports:
- ☐ Purposefully taught visual supports are used to help students identify their own behaviors, emotions and actions and practice appropriate self-regulation behaviors
- ☐ Using visuals, minimizes auditory input in stressful and difficult situations
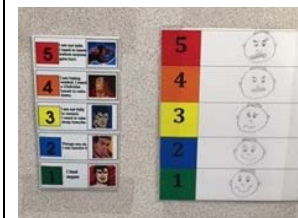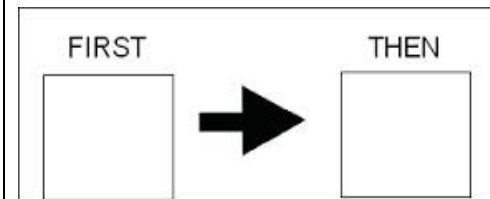
Visual Support Strategies Notes and Comments

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Functional Communication Training

Functional Communication trianing is defined as: replacement of interfering behavior that has a communication function with more appropriate communication that accomplishes the same function. (NPDC 2014)

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)

The Picture Exchange Communication System is defined as: A functional communication sytems in which learners are initially taught to give a picture of a desired item to a communicative partner in exchange for the desired item. PECS consists of six phases which are: (1) "how" to communicate, (2) distance and persistence, (3) picture discrimination, (4) sentence structure, (5) responsive requesting, and (6) commenting. (NPDC 2014)

Helping Hand: ☐ Visual used to make a request for help, clarification or assistance ☐ Provides an alternative way to communicate when in heightened emotional states	
Break Card and Break area: ☐ Used by students to request a break or time away from a difficult task ☐ Can be used to remind the student that a break is an option and that a break can be requested ☐ The break area is a calm, neutral "teaching area" for the students to learn self-regulation and coping skills	
Wait Card: ☐ The ability to understand the word "wait" is a critical listener skill. The Wait card can be paired with the spoken word during daily activities when "waiting is needed" ☐ The wait card makes "wait" more concrete and can be used in combination with a visual timer to give meaning to the abstract concept of time	
Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS): ☐ A specific protocol for teaching Functional Communication Skills in which student uses pictures or icons to communicate, <u>starting with spontaneous requesting</u> ☐ PECS System should be used across the day and in a variety of contexts (e.g. not just at snack time) and staff should be able to describe which of the six phases a student is on when asked about the use of the system	

Functional Communication and PECS Notes and Comments

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Reinforcement

Reinforcement is defined as: An event, activity, or other circumstance occurring after a learner engages in a desired behavior that leads to the increased occurrence of the behavior in the future. (NPDC 2014)

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Reinforcer Preference Assessment/Inventory: ☐ Direct observations and a reinforcer assessment allows the teacher to work with the students to identify a variety of highly preferred items ☐ The inventory is a tool for the teacher to document each individual student's reinforcers and update it as the student demonstrates interest in various items/activities. ☐ Inventories should be posted in the classroom for all staff to access on a regular basis. ☐ Staff should use this information to prepare potential reinforcers for each student that can be used across the day	
Visual Choice boards ☐ A visual menu of choices which represents available items that can be selected as a reinforcer by the student ☐ Increases functional communication opportunities ☐ Identifies a variety of items to increase student motivation	
Token Economy System: ☐ A system for providing <u>positive reinforcement</u> to a child by giving them tokens for completing tasks or engaging in desired behaviors (called "target behaviors") ☐ Once the specified number of tokens are earned, the child exchanges these tokens to gain access to backup reinforcers ☐ Positive reinforcement, via the tokens, can be provided immediately after the target behavior occurs. ☐ A token economy is structured to facilitate consistency with delivery of positive reinforcement for target behavior(s)	
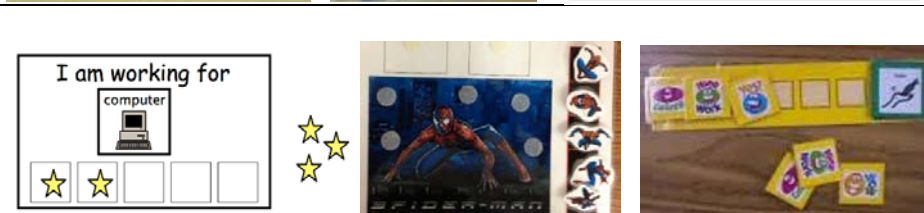
Reinforcement Notes and Comments

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Individual Lesson Planning and Data Based Decision Making

In addition to the EBPS reviewed above, a critical component to all ASD programs is <u>data based decision making</u>. Instructional plans are essential in developing individualized lessons targeting each student's specific needs. Data collections measures are needed to determine the effectiveness of the interventions and the progress of the student. Data based decision making should guide all classroom interventions and instructional plans.

Lesson plans are developed and utilized across activities, this can include:	
☐ Core Curriculum lesson planning forms ☐ Intervention Curriculum lesson planning forms (WIP, HWOT, Touch Math, Edmark) ☐ Functional Routine Tasks Analysis forms ☐ Planning Matrix to infuse lessons across the school day	 Instructional Plan Planning Matrix WIP Lesson Plan
Data Collection Measures should include: ☐ Student work product from the core and/or intervention curriculum, if working from the intervention and/or core curriculum ☐ Curriculum based assessments, if working from the intervention and/or core curriculum ☐ Skill Acquisition Charts (tracking progress over time), (all programs) ☐ Task Analysis, data measure for play skills, schedule acquisition, routine following, adaptive living skills (all programs) ☐ Discrete Trial data collection, if working from *Work In Progress* (Highly Intensive and Intensive Programs) ☐ Small group weekly data collection for the Intensive and Integrative Programs	 Acquisition Chart Task Analysis Discrete Trial Data Form Small Group Weekly Data Sheet

Individual Lesson Planning and Data Based Decision Making   Notes and Comments

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